

Professor Troeltsch has pointed out that Protestants, not less than Catholics, emphasized the idea of a Church-civilization, in which all departments of life, the State and society, education and science, law, commerce and industry, were to be regulated in accordance with the law of God.¹⁴ That conception dominates all the utterances of Luther on social issues. So far from accepting the view which was afterwards to prevail, that the world of business is a closed compartment with laws of its own, and that the religious teacher exceeds his commission when he lays down rules for the moral conduct of secular affairs, he reserves for that plausible heresy denunciations hardly less bitter than those directed against Rome* The text of his admonitions is always, " unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees/" and his appeal is from a formal, legalistic, calculated virtue to the natural kindness which does not need to be organized by law, because it is the spontaneous expression of a habit of love. To restore is to destroy. The comment on Luther's enthusiasm for the simple Christian virtues of an age innocent of the artificial chicaneries of ecclesiastical and secular jurisprudence came in the thunder of revolution. It was the declaration of the peasants, that " the message of Christ, the promised

Messiah, the word of life, teaching only love, peace, patience and concord," was incompatible with serfdom, *corvtes*, and *f&closures*." *---••

The practical conclusion to which such premises led was a theory of society more mediaeval than that held by many thinkers in the Middle Ages, since it dismissed the commercial developments of the last two centuries as a relapse into paganism. The foundation of it was partly the Bible, partly a vague conception of a state of nature in which men had not yet been corrupted by riches, partly the popular protests against a commercial civilization which were everywhere in the air, and which Luther, a man of the people, absorbed and